

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/942,905

Examiner

Anh Ly

Applicant(s)

IMAICHI ET AL.

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 04/24/2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 4-6, 9-16, and 19-23 (renumbered as 1-17).
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is response to Applicants' AMENDMENT filed on 03/20/2007.
2. Claims 2-3, 7-8 and 17-18 have been cancelled.
3. Claims 1, 4-6, 9-16 and 19-23 are allowed.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. The present application has been thoroughly reviewed. Upon searching a variety of databases, the examiner respectfully submits that claims 1, 4-6, 9-16 and 19-23 are allowed in light of the applicant's argument and in light of the prior of made record.

Reason For Allowance

5. The following is an examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance:

The present invention is directed to a method, a system and a search server of performing an associative search by correlating a plurality of document databases, the history of the associative search is stored as an associative search recording table and by using this recording table for showing order of document databases presented.

6. The closest prior art, US Patent No.: 5,454,105 issued to Hatakeyama et al. (hereinafter Hatakeyama) teaches a document information search method and system that reduces the wait time in the event that a plurality of search requests are sent to a search device simultaneously by executing the multiple search requests simultaneously – namely parallel. Hatakeyama fails to teaches an associative server that is capable of instructing a document search by specifying a document database (j) to be searched

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next among a plurality of document databases, based on a search result generated from a previous search of a document database (i) and an associate search recording table that records number of times $x(ij)$ of searching the document database (j) based on the search results generated from the previous searches of the document database (i).

These distinct features, in conjunction with all other limitations of the dependents and independent claims renders claims 1, 4-6, 9-16 and 19-23 renders them allowable.

7. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."


Contact Information

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ANH LY, whose telephone number is (571) 272-4039 or via e-mail: ANH.LY@USPTO.GOV (**written authorization being given by Applicant(s) - MPEP 502.03 [R-2]**) or fax to (571) 273-4039 (examiner's personal fax number).

The examiner can normally be reached on TUESDAY – THURSDAY from 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, **John Breene**, can be reached on **(571) 272-4107**.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). Any response to this action should be mailed to: Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, or faxed to: **Central Fax Center: (571) 273-8300**

ANH LY 
MAY 8th, 2007


JOHN BREENE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2100